21 August 2016 – The ongoing crisis in Iraq has led to millions of internally displaced persons. Their needs are wide-ranging and include basic shelter, security, water, food and health care. The prevalence and relapse rates of mental, neurological and substance use disorders increase in complex emergencies.

WHO conducted a meeting on 18 August at Al Rasheed hotel, chaired by the WHO Regional Director for the Eastern Mediterranean Dr Ala Alwan in the presence of deans and heads of departments psychiatry of medical schools in Baghdad and surrounding provinces, in addition to key officials of the Ministry of Health/mental health directors to discuss their support to the health sector response, in general, and mental health and psychosocial services response, in particular, including the role of medical schools in supporting mental health and psychosocial services.

The meeting prioritized needs and resources available to respond to challenging environment related to mental health and strengthen integration between the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Higher Education, stakeholders and partners to achieve the intended goals in providing best quality mental health services to internally displaced persons and vulnerable groups.

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